

a guide wheel ~~(10)~~ on associated with the first pin (18), the first pin [(18)] at an angle to the slat [(4)]; and
connectors for connecting the slat (4) to the first link block [(11)] in a fixed position relative thereto.

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 are pending in the application, with claim 1 being the independent claim.

Claims 1-2, and 7-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by US 5,667,054 to Van den Goor (hereafter “Van den Goor”). Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Van den Goor in view of US patent 6,241,080 to Tuomikoski (hereafter “Tuomikoski”). Claims 4-7 are under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Van den Goor in view of US publication 2003/0168323 to Frost (hereafter “Frost”). Claim 2 is further objected to for informalities.

Based on the following Remarks, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration of the outstanding rejections.

With respect to the informalities of claim 2, the noted informalities have been revised according to the Examiner’s suggestions. The reference numbers in the claims have also been deleted in accordance with U.S. practice. Additionally, typographical errors and non-colloquial usage resulting from translational errors have also been corrected in the claims. Furthermore, informalities discovered in the specification at page 7 have also been corrected via the amendment to the specification above.

With respect to the rejection of claims over Van den Goor, Applicants has amended the claims more clearly point out that the first and second pins located at the ends of the link are parallel to each other. Van den Goor does not teach or suggest such a limitation and requires a distinctly different arrangement.

In particular, Van den Goor is drawn to a conveyor comprising an endless driving chain (1) which is built from a plurality of links (2) and (3). Each of the links is coupled to an adjacent link by means of a pivot pin (4) extending horizontally and a pivot pin (5) extending vertically. That is, pivot pin (5) extends in a direction perpendicular to that of pivot pin (4). *See col. 3: 17-26.*

In contrast to Van den Goor, the present invention includes a single pivot axis via pin (18). This single pivot axis design of the present invention simplifies the linkage coupling resulting in the benefits of the invention including reduced inventory parts for maintenance of the conveyor. *See the present specification at page 2, paragraph 1.* For at least these reasons, Van den Goor does not disclose or suggest the combination of claim 1.

Tuomikoski and Frost do not remedy the deficiencies of Van den Goor either and do not teach the combination of claim 1. In particular, the only related teaching in the two references is the pin (16) of frost which couples two adjacent links. The linkage of Frost, however, is quite different from that of the present invention and functions without an offset bushing. Further, the linkage of Frost is so different from that of Van den Goor that application of the teachings of Frost to Van den Goor would destroy the Van den Goor invention and teach away from it.

For at least the reasons above, the prior art references, taken alone or in combination, neither disclose nor suggest the combination of claim 1. As such, allowance of claim 1 is respectfully requested. Claims 2-10 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for the at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1.

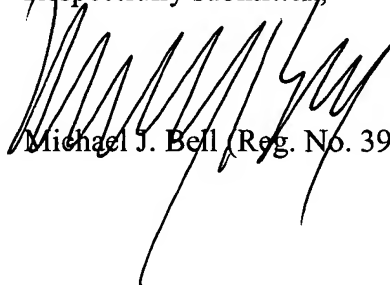
In view of the aforementioned amendments and explanation regarding the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and §103, it is requested that the rejections be withdrawn and the claims permitted to issue.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants believe that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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